



THE IMPACT OF PRE-CAREER INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE ON GRADUATES' CAREER SUCCESS

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Dissertation written under the supervision of Andrew C.
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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements for the
MSc in Management, at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa,
30.12.2016.

Abstract

Title

The impact of pre-career international experience on graduate's Career Success

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This thesis aims to investigate pre-career international experience of university graduates and whether it affects their Career Success or not. I hypothesized that students with international experience are more successful in their career than students without. Also, I expected that this effect would be stronger with a higher degree of international experience and a longer stay. In order to assess this topic, a mixed-method approach was chosen to collect quantitative and qualitative data with two studies. First, insights were collected at interviews with seven Human Resource managers of large German multinational companies. Although all companies are highly internationalized, requirements of candidates depend on the companies' strategy and corporate culture. Study 2 checked Entrepreneurs in regards to their pre-career international experience and Career Success by measuring collected funding. Results did not show a statistically significant relationship between international experience and Career Success in general. However, among the international founders, the ones with a higher degree of internationality and a longer experience abroad were more successful.

Key words:

Career Success, International Experience, International Business Education, Study Abroad

Abstrato

Título

O impacto de experiências pré-carreiras internacionais no sucesso das carreiras

Autor

Georg Holleccek

Esta tese tem como objetivo investigar a experiência internacional pré-carreira de graduados da Universidade, e se isso afeta o seu sucesso de carreira ou não. A minha hipótese que os estudantes com experiência internacional são mais bem sucedidos nas suas carreiras do que os alunos sem. Para além disso, eu esperava que este efeito seria maior com um grau mais elevado de experiência internacional. Para avaliar este tópico, uma abordagem mista foi escolhida para coletar dados tanto quantitativos como qualitativos. As primeiras impressões foram obtidas através de entrevistas a sete diretores da área de Recursos Humanos de empresas multinacionais alemãs. Apesar de todas as empresas serem altamente internacionais, os requisitos dos candidatos variam de acordo com a estratégia das empresas e a própria cultura das mesmas. Assim, os dados foram coletados para avaliar a questão. A população foi validada em relação à sua experiência internacional pré-carreira e sucesso da sua carreira como empreendedores. Os resultados obtidos não mostram uma relação estatisticamente significativa entre a experiência internacional e o sucesso da carreira em geral. No entanto, entre os fundadores internacionais, os que apresentavam um grau mais elevado de internacionalização e uma experiência mais longa no exterior foram mais bem sucedidos.

Palavras-Chave: Sucesso na carreira, Experiência Internacional, Educação Internacional Administrativa, Estudar no Estrangeiro

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my master thesis supervisor Andrew C. Hafenbrack for the strong commitment, support and dedication he provided me during the process of writing this dissertation. This would not have been possible without his feedback and assistance. It was a pleasure working with him.

Moreover, I would also like to show my appreciation to all the interview partners who took the time to answer my questions patiently.

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Abbreviations

Company Assigned Expatriates = AE

International Assignees = IA

International Business / International Business Education = IB

International Business Travelers = IBT

Multinational Corporation = MNC

Pearson Correlation = PC

Self-Initiated Expatriate = SIE or SE

Small and Medium-sized Enterprise = SME

Top Management Teams = TMT

1. Introduction

This thesis focuses on the impact that the international experience of university graduates has on their Career Success. The career of an individual is influenced by several Human Capital factors. One of those factors, the *international experience* of the individual, is often used to predict career advancement of an employee. Previous research has extensively conducted surveys and studies among corporate expatriates or repatriates to investigate how their cross-border experience impacted their career advancement (Stahl, Miller, & Tung, 2002; Benson & Pattie, 2008). On the contrary, the research about pre-career expatriation of students and its impact on Career Success has been mostly neglected so far (Schworm et al., 2015).

Some authors have recognized this gap in the literature and therefore “would have wished to have information on the prior experience of the [...] group of [...] economics graduates” (Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008, p. 990). It is surprising that past research was not focused on this topic for several reasons.

Firstly, over three million European students in total have pursued Erasmus exchange semesters since 1987. In 2013/14, over 272.000 students used the Erasmus program. This number has steadily increased in the past decades for over 12 percent annually (European Commission, 2015). Secondly, a growing number of research reports cases of failing international corporate assignments and a higher turnover rate among returning repatriates (Gregersen, Morrison, & Black, 1998; Kraimer, Shaffer, & Bolino, 2009). Therefore, companies must seek improvement of the established model of expatriatism. One solution could be to hire candidates that already bring international experience through their education, because this could reduce the risk of international assignment failure (Gregersen, Morrison, & Black, 1998).

Consequently, the aim of this thesis is to fill this gap in literature and to better understand the impact of pre-career international experience on business graduates' Career Success. Not only will this help add academic value, but can also give valuable insights for hiring managers to better recognize the importance of cross-border experience as criteria for applicants and how these skills can bring a value to the company and improve its success. Also, the results of this thesis can be of value for universities that are considering implementing international tracks to their business degree programs.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Career Success

The “positive psychological or work-related outcomes or achievements one has accumulated as a result of one's work experiences” is commonly defined as Career Success (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995; Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001). This is a widely discussed topic in the academic literature. Not only university graduates, but also researchers, employees and corporations are interested in Career Success and its predictability and everyone can benefit from a greater understanding about the topic (Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005).

In the early investigations about Career Success, most authors were just focused on so-called *objective* or *extrinsic* Career Success aspects. Those can be judged and seen by anybody. Objective aspects are factors such as the salary or the ascendancy (number of promotions). Researchers chose these factors because it is relatively easy to obtain data and the fact that salary is a measurement that is widely accepted for comparison (Gutteridge, 1973).

As one of the first publications, Judge and colleagues (1995) empirically included objective aspects together with the subjective or intrinsic aspects of Career Success. For instance, the subjective Career Success aspects include the general job satisfaction or career satisfaction. The study furthermore highlights that there are other aspects that are judged by the individual.

While some authors of publications about career success take both aspects – objective and subjective Career Success – into consideration (Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005; Arthur, Khapova, & Wilderom, 2005; Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001; Biemann & Braakmann, 2013), others only focus on objective factors like salary and promotion (Gutteridge, 1973; Benson & Pattie, 2008). According to Arthur and colleagues (2005), some researchers even suggest an interdependence of subjective and objective Career Success (either one way or two ways).

Factors influencing Career Success

Several factors can influence the success of one's career. According to the *Conceptual Model of Career Success* (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995), those factors are grouped into categories such as the *Demographics*, the *Human Capital*, *Motivational* aspects as well as *Organizational/Industry Characteristics*. One of the most obvious and much discussed topics in the field of career research is how the Demographics affect the success.

For example, it was found that an employee that is married receives additional resources for his career and job from his wife. This so-called *wife-as-resource* perspective was true especially for managers, because according to the authors, those are affected the most by uncertainty in evaluation. It was hereby found that if the wife was working, the effect was smaller than if the wife was not working. However, the manager's career would still benefit from the marriage than if he was single (Pfeffer & Ross, 1982).

Another aspect that was often mentioned in the literature is the role of race on career outcomes. Greenhaus and colleagues (1990) investigated this relationship and found that black managers in the US felt less attention within their companies and consequently lower evaluations as well as career satisfaction. The effects of race were quite significant and consistent with other studies. The authors explain this phenomenon with the fact that in the one hand, the early education experiences of the minority managers could be responsible for a lower career outcome. On the other hand, it is possible that the race differences have nothing to do with the actual performance, but rather are caused by a bias of the mostly white supervisors due to stereotyping and other reasons. Other examples for Demographic predictors are gender and age (Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005).

Human Capital Theory

Another group of the Conceptual Model of Career Success is the Human Capital. Originated from the Nobel Prize winner in Economic Science¹, Gary Becker, the theory of Human Capital is about "activities that influence future real income through the imbedding of resources in people" (Becker, 1962, p. 9). This theory is

¹ The Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences 1992 was awarded to Gary Becker "for having extended the domain of microeconomic analysis to a wide range of human behaviour and interaction, including nonmarket behaviour". Source: http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/1992/

very established in common career literature as one factor to explain Career Success (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2001a; Biemann & Braakmann, 2013).

Those investments are for instance job trainings, taking care of the health or nutrition and acquiring knowledge about topics such as the economic system. As the author points out, the intangible factors play hereby a larger role and therefore the possession of education is an important investment and could be one explanation for the wealth inequality among people (Becker, 1962). This goes along with the findings of other research in the field of Career Success (Pfeffer & Ross, 1982). Therefore the quantity, quality and type of education was chosen to be an important point in the Conceptual Model of Career Success (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995). However, only recent authors emphasized the role of International Business (IB) education in regards to the learnings that can advance a graduate's Career Success, as described below in Chapter 2.4.

Other factors of Human Capital are for example job tenure and work experience. This includes the length of work experience and most importantly the international experience. Judge and colleagues (1995) found in their studies that one of the reasons for a high job tenure or a high amount of accomplishments among executives was that they had international experience. As discussed below, it is therefore used to predict Career Success. These findings are aligned with the findings of similar studies which concluded that for higher-management positions in MNC's, international work experience is often a major requirement (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2001a) and that indeed a CEO with longer international experience has a larger success and tenure than one with a lack of this experience (Daily, Certo, & Dalton, 2000).

The third group in the model are the Motivational aspects. For example, it was found that the amount of work-hours are a success indicator, because it affects the amount of salary (Gutteridge, 1973). Some researchers even consider the evening hours worked, because it reflects an extra dedication of the employee (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995). More examples are the willingness to transfer, career planning and social capital. For some researchers however, those factors fall under Human Capital (Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005).

All factors that were mentioned above are somehow related to the individual. The model however also provides factors that depend on the organization or the industry. For example, the Size or Success of an Organization, the industry factor or

the region are Organizational/Industry Characteristics (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995).

Ng and Colleagues (2005) added another category to the original model, the Organizational sponsorship. Those aspects “represent the extent to which organizations provide special assistance to employees to facilitate their Career Success” (Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005, p. 371). The chosen variables were career sponsorship, supervisor support, training and skill development opportunities, and organizational resources. The relation of corporate support with expatriation through policies or development programs however, is a topic that still has potential for future research (Kraimer, Shaffer, & Bolino, 2009).

Social Capital effects on Career Success

The above described model by Judge and colleagues (1995) includes many factors and provides a good basis for further research. It reflects the context of the Career Success research prior to the year 2000. Therefore, Seibert and colleagues (2001) extended the model with the theory of the so-called *Social Capital*. This theory takes into consideration the influence of networking and how this will affect one's career goals. The authors combined different similar approaches of the social capital theory and were the first ones to test this theory empirically on Career Success. Thus, the control variables *Demographic*, *Human Capital*, *Organizational variables as well as Network size* were chosen to be diverse in order to ensure that the results were significant.

The results of the study showed that the Social Capital is affected by the number of weak ties as well as the degree of structural holes in one's network. Although those weak ties play an important role, only strong network ties help the individual with information and social support. Hence, this paper is advising individuals to “invest in the development of weak ties [...], but then to invest (perhaps selectively) in strengthening those ties to increase the benefits actually mobilized on his or her behalf” (Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001, p. 232).

However, as some authors already found before, the individual effect of the ties in a personal network also depends on the kind of contacts one may have and the current career stage as well. For instance, contacts in other functions can help to advance information and resources, while contacts at higher levels can accelerate

career sponsorship. The *Structural Equation Model* below illustrates the probability of how those network benefits influenced Career Success in the empirical study (Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001).

Additional Theories

While reviewing the literature, it was noticed that two papers used another theory, the so-called Signaling theory (Benson & Pattie, 2008; Biemann & Braakmann, 2013). This theory basically states that companies have a high uncertainty when they hire people. Since hiring people is seen as investment, the author compares it to purchasing a lottery ticket. In other words, companies have a high risk as they do not know how the employee will turn out. Therefore, several characteristics can be observed and give the firm a hint, which is called the signal (Spence, 1973).

In terms of the effects of international experience on one's career, Biemann & Braakmann (2013) state that it has positive implications due to the signaling theory. This can be explained with the circumstance that an applicant with prior international experience signals the company where he applies that he is highly motivated and capable of dealing with international challenges, because he got previously selected to do the expatriate assignment. Also, he can signal that he gained valuable experience during that time (Benson & Pattie, 2008).

However, this point of view is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, not all aspects such as education or prior experience are determined by the individuals performance. For instance, it was concluded that also variables such as age, race or gender can influence the signal (Spence, 1973). This can allow decisions that are based on discrimination (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990). Secondly, as Ramaswami and colleagues (2016) pointed out, the theory does not differentiate between the length or depth of an assignment, nor the amount of assignments. Signaling theory hence is in contradiction to Human Capital theory and therefore not taken into consideration by most authors.

Predictability of Career Success

As mentioned before, many authors that dedicate their research to careers success are consequently also interested in the predictability of it. One of the first publications that asked this question was Gutteridge (1973). The author found that MBA students with prior full-time work experience advanced their career faster than people without prior work experience. The author furthermore suggests that those students should develop a career strategy.

Another study found that not all variables predict the outcome salary, but rather the ascendancy of an employee. For instance, “international experience, job [experience] and occupational tenure predicted promotions but not pay” (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995, p. 511). Hence, this study was one of the first to find that having international experience is actually useful in predicting positive objective Career Success. As the main focus of this thesis lies on the international experience, the following chapter therefore will take a deeper look into literature findings of the association of international experience in regards to its implications on an individuals Career Success.

In conclusion, different theories exist to explain Career Success. The Human Capital factors are mostly essential for this thesis in order to proceed. Many publications about implications on Career Success from international experience share the same view on this important theory (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2001a; Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005; Ramaswami, Carter, & Dreher, 2016). However, it should be mentioned that the Social Capital theory of Seibert and colleagues (2001) brings a useful addition to the Human Capital. However, it can be concluded that the signaling theory is not able to explain a possible relationship between international experience and career advancement.

2.2. International Experience

Today's work environment is highly globalized. Not only do large Multinational Companies (MNC's) operate on an international scale (Shrader, Oviatt, & McDougall, 2000), but a growing number of Small and Medium-sized enterprises (SME's). The reason for this is due to "changing economic, technological, and social conditions", that enable firms additional resources to internationalize without having a certain size (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994, p. 51). This trend even occurs in startup companies that are already operating globally soon after inception. Those are referred to in the literature as Born Globals (Harveston, Kedia, & Davis, 2000; Knight & Cavusgil, 2004).

Since many authors mention international experience in their publications, it is important to clarify what exactly is meant by this term. Firstly, some journals define *international experience*, *experience overseas* or *cross-border experience* as time living abroad, and not to travelling abroad, because there is a "robust relationship between living in and adapting to foreign countries" (Maddux & Galinsky, Cultural Borders and Mental Barriers: The Relationship Between Living Abroad and Creativity, 2009, p. 1060).

The most important form of living abroad is the international work assignment, also known as expatriate assignment, which has been investigated by many studies (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2001a; Dickmann, Dohery, Mills, & Brewster, 2008; Benson & Pattie, 2008). The broader topic of international assignments is sometimes defined as global work. Common literature has identified several types of global work as described below (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012). Other cross-border experiences are of academic nature, such as exchange semesters, studies abroad, internships, MBA programs or research assignments (Ryan, Silvanto, & Brown, 2013; Schworm et al., 2015; Ramsey & Lorenz, 2016). Lastly, some also consider long-term travel experience, because it has similar effects on the career than work experience (Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun, & Lepak, 2005; Ryan, Silvanto, & Brown, 2013).

Expatriates and international work assignments

The majority of corporate managers nowadays gain international experience while working on cross-border assignments. Those employees are referred to as *expatriates* (Stahl, Miller, & Tung, 2002). While it is common to assign the employees for a longer period of time – sometimes even several years long – more companies establish short-term assignments of a few months in order to save costs (Benson & Pattie, 2008). Once the expatriates return from their assignment, the literature refers to them as *repatriates* (Benson & Pattie, 2008; Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012). Some authors differentiate between individuals that are sent by their organization, the so-called company assigned expatriates (AEs) and the ones that are self-initiated expatriates (SEs or SIEs respectively), as described below (Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008; Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012).

Takeuchi and colleagues (2005) take into account multiple theories about international experience of expatriates and researched on how previous and current international assignments influenced the cross-cultural adjustments of the expats. The empirical study found that if expats have less and shorter prior work experience, the “current assignment tenure has more influence on work adjustment” (Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun, & Lepak, 2005, p. 89).

The study furthermore concluded that prior international experience had an impact on an expatriates cultural adaption. However, this impact is considered more complex and – consistent with previous studies – showed a positive, but weak relationship. The author refers to the role of a “moderator” that international experience plays and not the “antecedent to expatriates’ cross-cultural adjustment” (Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun, & Lepak, 2005, p. 96).

Advantages and disadvantages of expatriate assignments

One of the main advantages that international work assignment offers is due to the fact that “developing the international experience of managers is critical [...] [and] is of value” (Roth, 1995, p. 226). This goes along with the fact that many expats expect that their career will benefit from their experience abroad when they come home (Gregersen, Morrison, & Black, 1998) and even receive a greater amount of future internal or external job offers (Benson & Pattie, 2008). This is similar to findings which suggest that the extend to which one adapts and learns about new

cultures, the so-called *multicultural engagement*, can predict the career success in terms of job offers (Maddux, Bivolaru, Hafenbrack, Tadmor, & Galinsky, 2014).

However, some findings suggest that not all individuals will succeed in benefitting from cross-border experience in terms of creativity. Firstly, only if one can maintain psychological connections to the home culture as well as the new host culture, can one achieve creative and professional success (Tadmor, Galinsky, & Maddux, 2012). It was also found that if an individual spends too much time abroad, it will become less flexible, something that Godart and colleagues (2015, p. 200) referred to as the phenomenon of “cognitive entrenchment”. This would consequently lower the individual creativity. Thirdly, a different study highlights the common reluctant attitude of managers towards offers for international assignments, because they are concerned about negative implications for their individual career path (Stahl, Miller, & Tung, 2002). Moreover, “approximately 25 percent of U.S. expatriates who successfully complete an international assignment leave their company within a year” (Gregersen, Morrison, & Black, 1998, p. 31). Unless companies provide strategies to retain their repatriates, the question remains for the managers whether the international assignment is beneficial for them after they return or not. One example is that companies, which support their repatriates while they pursue their international assignment, have lower turnover rates of repatriates (Kraimer, Shaffer, & Bolino, 2009). Consequently, many more studies are dedicated to research about the transition from expatriate to repatriate (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012; Lazarova & Caligiuri, 2001).

Other types of global work

Previously, most researchers have been solely focused on corporate expatriates. However, some authors point out that there is a broader scope of international work experience. This is also an indication that the topic is still in its infancy and many different types of international experiences have yet to be investigated empirically (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012). Shaffer and colleagues therefore reviewed previous literature and identified several types of global work. The first aspect of differentiation is whether the expat is sent from the organization (AEs) or initiated the work abroad himself (SIEs). Little has been researched so far about the SIEs, which usually finance their stay abroad themselves.

Regardless of this, it was found that international work is always a great learning experience, whether it was initiated by an organization or by the individual himself. Therefore, SIEs also see their competency level increase due to the international work and it can offer similar possibilities as organizational expatriation. However, SIEs do not significantly increase their organizational knowledge, since they usually join a new organization abroad (Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008).

Other types of global work are Short-Term Assignees that are defined as “employees on international assignment that are longer than business trips yet shorter than typical corporate assignments” (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012, p. 1287). The duration of the assignment hereby is usually 3-12 months and its primary target is to transfer skills/technology or to solve problems. The last two forms are the *Flexpatriates* as well as the International Business Travelers. Both travel frequently for short-term assignments away from their home base. The new type of Flexpatriate is typically gone for 1-2 months for projects or problem solving and is a response of HR managers for the demand of flexible work force and global staffing issues (Mayerhofer, Hartmann, Michelitsch-Riedl, & Kollinger, 2004). In contrast to this is the International Business Traveler, which is usually gone only for 1-3 weeks for negotiations, discussions or knowledge transfer (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012).

Motivation and impact of going abroad

In general, literature distinguishes between the individual perspective and the organizational perspective when exploring the motives behind the decision to go abroad. Those two different perspectives are often significantly different (Dickmann, Dohery, Mills, & Brewster, 2008).

Most MNC and larger organizations are interested in developing global leaders and therefore send their people on international assignments (Pless, Maak, & Stahl, 2011). Firms have also realized the benefits that a CEO with international experience can bring to them in regards of the firms' financial performance (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2001a). Also, it was found that the prior international background of Top Management Teams (TMT) is more significant for the extension of internationalization of US firms if they face high uncertainty (Carpenter & Fredrickson, 2001b). Thereby, most companies think too little of factors such as

work/life balance or development considerations, while they overrate financial and family aspects (Dickmann, Dohery, Mills, & Brewster, 2008).

Indeed, international experience also has a high impact on the individual's career. Most employees today are more concerned with the personal contribution of such an assignment for their career, rather than accepting blindly an overseas assignment from their employer. In addition, some studies suggest that intrinsic motivation such as the motive of personal challenge and professional development plays a larger role in the decision-making than the opportunities for the career advancement (Stahl, Miller, & Tung, 2002).

Previous literature has often highlighted what effect international experience and cross-cultural exposure can cause with an individual. Firstly, it can stimulate creativity, as was shown with the research regarding MBA and undergraduate students who scored a higher creativity level on psychological tests when they had lived abroad (Maddux & Galinsky, 2009). Secondly, it can shape the so-called *global identity* of an individual, "which is an individual's sense of belonging to and identification with groups (such as multicultural teams), operating in the global work environment of multinational organizations" (Shokef & Erez, 2006, p. 325). Not only do individuals benefit from their cross-border experience, but also the organization that they work for. For example, Godart and colleagues (2015) highlights the importance of creative innovations for the success of a company and therefore measured how previous international experiences could predict creative outcomes in the fashion industry.

To summarize, international experience is a broad field in the literature. However, most authors have been only focused on expatriates and repatriates that gain international experience in the post-career stage. A growing number of critical articles in the literatures led to the development of new concepts such as Flexpatriates. The following chapter will connect both topics and draw implications that international experience has on the Career Success and which factors lead to it. Also, the focus will be set on pre-career experience and the implications of an international education.

2.3. International Experience and its implications on Career Success

Many authors that were mentioned previously have taken expatriate assignments into consideration when elaborating the impact on Career Success. Some researchers hereby are more focused on the organizational perspective (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2001a; Dickmann, Dohery, Mills, & Brewster, 2008), while others consider the perspective of the individual (Benson & Pattie, 2008; Biemann & Braakmann, 2013; Ramaswami, Carter, & Dreher, 2016) or combine both points of view (Bolino, 2007; Kraimer, Shaffer, & Bolino, 2009). In general, results of past publications are not aligned. Although some authors suggest that international experience has a positive effect on one's career, others state that this is not clearly relatable. Overall it can be concluded that, although many papers about global work exist, this topic is still "in its infancy" (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012, p. 1309).

Implications of the Human Capital Theory

Early research such as Judge and colleagues (1995), who created the conceptual model of Career Success, give an indicator about which variables can positively affect an individuals career. Hereby, the *Human Capital* plays an important role as described in Chapter 2.1. It was found empirically that a possible reason for a high job tenure or accomplishments among managers was their prior international experience. This is not surprising, since by definition the "international experience increases the value of a person's knowledge and skill on the labor market, which in turn, increases their objective Career Success" (Biemann & Braakmann, 2013, p. 3441). Consequently, the factors that were introduced by Ng and colleagues (2005), would expect a link between cross-border experience and positive career outcomes. In addition, the above mentioned theory of *Social Capital*, which considers the influence of networking and how this will affect one's career goals (Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001) plays a similar important role.

Another paper examined the international experience of CEO's with their salary as well as the overall performance of the Multinational Corporation (MNC). It was found that those CEO's experience puts them in "control of a valuable, rare, and inimitable resource" (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2001a; p.493). The results in the study hereby showed, that if a company had an intense global strategy and top management team members with international background as well, then the effects would be the positive. Considering those previous studies, Bolino (2007) concluded that the relation of international assignment experience and Career Success "is not so straightforward" and that "there are multiple factors" (Bolino, 2007, p. 831). Consequently, the author developed a framework with greater detail to better understand multiple aspects of this relationship.

Factors influencing Career Success of expats

The first group in the model ties up with previously mentioned results about the *expatriate experience*. One factor is that a repatriate will achieve Career Success, if he or she concluded the assignment successfully. Also, the kind of assignment plays a role. If an organization sends an employee for managerial development, it is more likely that the Career Success advances than for assignments with other purposes. This signifies a contradiction to the findings of Kraimer and colleagues (2009) as described below. In alliance with other papers, it was also found that expatriates with prior significant international experience were more successful than the ones with less prior experience. However, cross-border assignments that last longer than 4 years are problematic and could be perceived as a liability rather than an asset. Finally, the strategic importance of the host subsidiary is another factor of the first group (Bolino, 2007).

The second group was titled *parent-organizational context* and includes factors that are critical for the overall success of the organization. Therefore, it can be stated that MNCs that have a "global strategic posture" as well as a CEO and TMTs with extensive international experience advance the intra-organizational career of their repatriates more than firms that have not (Bolino, 2007).

The third group conclude aspects of *career development practices*. Those factors are in alignment with previous mentioned research as well and consider the components that the company can provide to its expatriates, such as connectivity

mechanisms, assistance during the adjustment process and establishing a career development plan.

The three mentioned factor groups of repatriate Career Success are all linked to intra-organizational Career Success in Bolino's framework. The author moreover connects these findings with the outcomes on an individual and organizational level. The first aspect is *willingness to work overseas* and the second aspect is the *repatriate turnover*. Individuals hereby, must actually want to work abroad. This means that some employees are confronted with negative experiences of their coworkers and do not share the belief that an international assignment will benefit them. If an individual works in a firm that has a high turnover rate on repatriates, it reflects also negatively on the individuals which often feel that their experience is not acknowledged enough. Organizations are therefore required to demonstrate to potential candidates that an international assignment will benefit their career. This is closely linked to the success of prior expatriates. Also, the often mentioned large degree of repatriate that leave the organization soon after their return from abroad is costly for organizations. In addition, those people take knowledge and skills with them as Bolino (2007) points out.

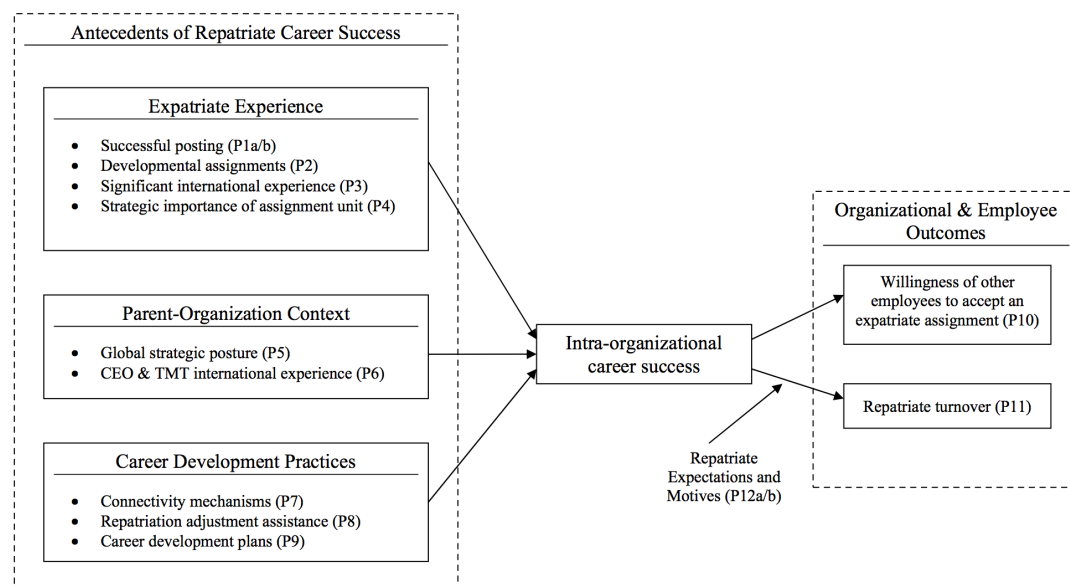


Figure 1: Basic Framework of Repatriate Career Success (Bolino, 2007, p. 823)

Other authors have considered Bolino's (2007) framework and added additional factors. For example, it is suggested that the degree of career advancement which is achieved after an expatriate assignment depends on the kind of assignment. While employees that conducted developmental expatriate assignments had a higher

likelihood of career progress, people that learned managerial skills “were less likely to perceive that they had advanced in their career” (Kraimer, Shaffer, & Bolino, 2009, p. 40). In addition, acquiring cultural skills during the time of the assignment did not play an important role for the Career Success progression. In addition, it was also found that the number of assignments that the individual accepts, can be important. As Kraimer and colleagues (2009) pointed out, expatriates have to carefully evaluate how many assignments they should choose since there is a possibility that more than one assignment could be harmful to their Career Success. However, this is in contradiction to the findings of Ramaswami and colleagues (2016) which found that expatriation was significant for the Career Success if MBA graduates had experienced more than one expatriate assignment.

Also, as previously mentioned, it is advised that organizations support their expatriates along the way, because this can lower the turnover rate of repatriates once they return. The question remains on what implication this support has on the individuals Career Success. While Bolino (2007) argues that intra-organizational Career Success will be greater among employees that received support from their organization, Kraimer and colleagues (2009) do not find evidence for career advancing effects coming from organizational support. Most importantly, it was stated that from the individuals' point of view, the employees that returned from their assignment and did not advance in any way were soon considering leaving their organization. An interviewee explained that he would then “search to find an organization that would recognize and reward [his] sacrifice and expertise” (Kraimer, Shaffer, & Bolino, 2009, p. 41). This quote highlights the core problem of individuals and their perceived career advancement. Even if their supervisors do not promise them a promotion, it is often assumed by them since they want to be recognized for their work abroad.

This goes along with findings that companies actually often struggle with supporting and understanding their repatriates, which causes the previously mentioned high rate of repatriates who leave their company within the first year of returning (Lazarova & Caligiuri, 2001).

Implication for HR managers and company leaders

The literature also suggests some implications for HR managers and their companies. Firstly, one possible solution for this problem could be that the company creates a career development plan together with the employee. This would be implemented during the expatriate assignment and can increase the likelihood of Career Success (Bolino, 2007). Secondly, some research points out that hiring people with “pre-career expatriation” such as the holders of “advanced [university] degrees abroad” can also increase the success rate (Ramaswami, Carter, & Dreher, 2016, p. 1960). Therefore, the following part will investigate how academic papers recognize the connection of international experienced university graduates and their implicated Career Success. In conclusion, previous research has been mostly focused on expatriates, repatriates and international experience related to employees in corporations. The fact that international experience has positive and negative implications on individuals and that companies often value those experiences lead authors to combine this topic with Career Success.

2.4. Impact of IB Education on graduates Career Success

The global work-environment nowadays also reflects on the higher education of many students. This trend can be seen, for example, in the growing number of Erasmus+ scholars who spend a semester abroad in a European country other than their home country. More than 3 million students already have applied for the Erasmus+ grants since its foundation in 1987 (European Commission, 2015, p. 30). However, it remains unclear how international experiences during the studies impact the career path of an individual. Most researchers took education as a variable when exploring Career Success. It was only checked if an individual had a university degree, but not in particular which skills one had learned during university. Hence, the impact of an international education on the success in one's career is widely neglected in research (Schworm et al., 2015). This is surprising, since the effect of human capital is said to be stronger in early careers as one has many years to gain from this experience. Only recently, some authors have empirically investigated university graduates and the early career path that they were facing (Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008; Biemann & Braakmann, 2013; Ryan, Silvanto, & Brown, 2013; Schworm et al., 2015; Ramaswami, Carter, & Dreher, 2016). The considered students were all in fields related to international business, economics or MBA programs. The reason therefore is that those type of students are more likely to have a corporate career with international tracks and because of the broad availability of data.

Firstly, it was found that the teaching methodologies play an important role. In particular, MBA programs that foster international travel, exchanges or internships among their students had a higher number of internationally mobile graduates than programs that did not emphasize this (Ryan, Silvanto, & Brown, 2013). Jokinen et al. used data from Finnish graduates of economic studies with a Master's degree or higher. As earlier described, it was found that both groups – SEs and AEs, had gained career capital through international work overseas. Although the educational background of the expatriates in the survey was important to the authors, no information on the graduates' prior international experience was given. Schworm and colleagues researched the impact of European IB education on Career Success and suggests a conceptual framework including the variables of global identity and

international experience. Furthermore, the global identity was found to support subjective Career Success in combination with international business education (Schworm et al., 2015). Ramaswami and colleagues (2016) took the earlier described human capital perspective under consideration and empirically studied different kinds of international experience of graduates from elite MBA programs. The key finding of the study is that the effects after the return are only positive if the repatriate had experienced more than one assignment. Furthermore, the authors are skeptical about the positive effects of expatriation on Career Success since the success could also result from other variables (Ramaswami, Carter, & Dreher, 2016).

2.5. Success factors of global entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship is very challenging as it requires the founder to master many different skills and to handle certain pressures. Several studies have been using entrepreneurship in conjunction with international experience as a success indicator. For example, entrepreneurship was one of the measurements for innovation in a study by Tadmor and colleagues (2012), where the authors asked MBA students about their own original ideas in regards to their inceptions and what impact their cross-border experience had on those ideas. Secondly, it was found that an individual leader plays a very important role in the success of a company as he can impact the behavior of the whole firm. Those consequences of the individual are not always positive, as for example overconfidence can lead to a quick escalation to losing courses of action (Staw, 1991). This effect is much bigger in fast growing international startup companies, which have managers that are more influential than managers in gradual globalizing firms (Harveston, Kedia, & Davis, 2000). Hence, startup founders are also interesting for the measurement of success due to the different role that they play within their organization. Thirdly, a young company often does not have much organizational experience and its resources are limited, the experience of the founders and the management team can make a huge impact on the companies' success. For instance, it was found that a prior international experience of the managers for example can not only accelerate the internationalization process, but also manage international risks. These managers "may be better equipped to deal with and more comfortable accepting international risk" (Shrader, Oviatt, & McDougall, 2000, p. 1233). This goes along with the fact that more experienced managers have higher business skills and are more advanced at decision making.

3. Hypotheses

As described earlier, international experience can give an important indication on a positive career outcome. Many researchers have therefore looked into the perspective of the individual. Few have written about the firm's point of view. Findings about corporations fall quite short. Among them, it was found that corporations are interested in developing global leaders (Pless, Maak, & Stahl, 2011), that international TMT's increase a company's financial performance (Carpenter, Sanders, & Gregersen, 2001a) or reduce uncertainty (Carpenter & Fredrickson, 2001b). However, it has not been researched before how applicants with previous international experience from university are perceived. Therefore, I expect the following:

Hypothesis 1: HR managers of multinational firms favor graduate applicants with prior international experience over similar candidates without international experience for the same position.

Some authors consider entrepreneurial aspects when elaborating Career Success. However, I am not aware of a paper that specifically considers the Career Success of entrepreneurs in regards to their prior international experience. This is surprising for three reasons. Firstly, the founder himself can influence the success of the company much more than a corporate manager can influence the success of a large MNC (Harveston, Kedia, & Davis, 2000). Secondly, as mentioned in Chapter 2.1, the Human Capital factors that are linked to the organization such as organizational sponsorship, training or organizational resources do not apply for startup companies as those usually do not have the resources to further train or support their employees (Knight & Cavusgil, 2004). Therefore, the founder's success is much more related to his prior experience and not caused by trainings he received while working. Thirdly, entrepreneurial skills are already implemented in many leading business schools and universities, because they have positive effects. It was even found that international experience fosters entrepreneurship, because students developed business ideas while living abroad (Tadmor, Galinsky, & Maddux, 2012). Therefore, I decided to investigate into the pre-career international experience of

founders and whether it links to their Career Success:

Hypothesis 2: Startup founders who gained international experience abroad in university are more successful than founders who did not have pre-career international experiences.

As previously found in the literature review, the intensity of internationalization and cross-border experience plays an important role as well. In regards to Human Capital theory, I hypothesized the following:

Hypothesis 3: A longer stay abroad will have a higher positive effect on the success of a founder.

4. Overview of Studies

As previously mentioned, individual employees and their employers sometimes have different opinions regarding how much an international assignment should count for career advancement. Therefore, I want to consider both perspectives in this thesis. The most common methodologies that I found in the literature review were interviews and surveys. Shaffer and colleagues (2012) systematically reviewed 114 empirical papers about global work and were able to give a good summary about the state-of-the art publications until 2012. 51 papers were conducting interviews, 61 surveys and 2 case studies. From those 114 empirical papers, only 5 were considering the HR-managers point of view (3 interviews, 1 survey and one mixed-method). One of those papers from Dickmann and colleagues (2008) uses both, qualitative and quantitative methods for their research about the individual and corporate factors that influence the decision-making to accept an international assignment. In addition, the authors took the perspective of the expatriates as well as the corporate perspective (in form of HR managers) into consideration and focused on a single organization to better explore these factors.

Therefore, this study conducted interviews with HR managers first. After evaluating recurring themes in the interview results, it was clear to me that there was a real demand to find the answer of this problem from both points of view – the individual perspective and the corporate perspective. Hence, the hypotheses² were developed and the quantitative data was collected and analyzed.

² See Chapter 3

4.1. Study 1

Methodology

In order to gather first information and to understand the topic in greater detail, 7 Interviews with German Human Resource professionals were conducted. All interview partners worked at large Multinational Companies that have a significant presence overseas and employ multinational teams. This is an ideal population to sample for this research question because HR managers are often the people who decide how much international experience is valued when evaluating prospective candidates for positions within their companies.

Results and discussion

The first insight of the interviews is that the opinions about international expatriate assignments and international skills of candidates are not consistent across all companies. Some interview partners require all applicants to have international experience; others rather look at the overall impression. In general, the hiring practices and requirements depend on the overall strategy and culture of the firm. This is a similar finding to the study of Carpenter and colleagues (2001a) and Roth (1995), which suggest that if a company has a rather domestic focus, the relationship between the firms performance and the international experience of its CEO is negative. On the other hand, if a company's strategy is global, this relates positively. Hence, the firm has to choose its top managers and CEO aligning with its strategy.

Secondly, some interview partners could share the experience they had with managers that were sent abroad and returned. Among the mentioned advantages was "personal development" for the managers, "broaden horizon" and "escaping from the daily routine". On the other hand, some mentioned negative implications. Very often, the concern was raised, that a manager would lose their position in Germany after being sent abroad for too long and that when he would come back, it could lead to a "downgrade" of the position. As found in the extensive literature review above, the conclusions of prior studies are not consistent as well. Some authors see global work practices as a great opportunity (Roth, 1995; Gregersen, Morrison, & Black, 1998;

Benson & Pattie, 2008), while others highlight the negative aspects (Lazarova & Caligiuri, 2001; Stahl, Miller, & Tung, 2002; Kraimer, Shaffer, & Bolino, 2009; Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012).

Thirdly, all managers said that they assume that graduates with pre-career international experience are more likely to succeed in an international career. However, none of the interview partners could provide reliable data or statistics of the firm to prove my hypothesis. Also, most new hires that come from university do not get sent abroad immediately, but rather after one or more years that they have worked for the company. The reason for this is that international assignments usually are costly for the firm and that common practice is that expats are usually on a higher level. However, all levels of employees do have to work in multinational teams. Indeed, the HR professionals perceived that candidates with pre-career experience are more “comfortable and slickly” to work in such teams. This goes along with the findings of Takeuchi and colleagues (2005), that suggest that an international assignment can be a great opportunity to a junior employee in order to develop skills and to become a future global leader (Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun, & Lepak, 2005). On the other hand, this means for example to hire people with more international experience for “productive tasks”. In any case, the study recommends to hire managers based the nature of the tasks.

The fourth outcome of the interviews, were to find out about possible best practices for hiring managers. Some interviewees were very critical about international work assignments, because some previous expat assignments failed. Therefore, some are evaluating new models of international work. In particular, one manager reported about a 2-2-2 model, which means that every new hire needs to work in two different departments in two areas in two countries. Each assignment is only short term for about 6 months. This model was said to be more successful than a prior long-term expatriate model. This goes along with findings of the literature review where many MNCs are changing their traditional model of international assignments by implementing shorter assignments rather than long-term stays abroad (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012). Therefore, HR managers are responding to the emerging demand for a flexible workforce by implementing new models such as the Flexpatriate, that “require as much skill, adaptability and resilience as longer-term placements” (Mayerhofer, Hartmann, Michelitsch-Riedl, & Kollinger, 2004, p. 1371). In addition, it was found in the literature that expatriates that show a higher

initial level of work adjustment were the ones that showed a high motivation for their assignments. Therefore, HR managers should interview candidates about their cross-cultural motivation (Firth, Kirkman, & Kim, 2014). Indicators hereby can be previous international work, studies abroad or similar experiences.

Overall, results of the interviews support Hypothesis 1 that HR managers of Multinational Firms favor graduate applicants with prior international experience over similar candidates for the same position without international experience.

Lastly, all interviewees agreed about the high relevance of this research, because it can give valuable insights for students and companies as well. Therefore, I proceeded with the data collection of the entrepreneur sample.

4.2. Study 2

This thesis considers only *objective* success factors and neglects intrinsic facts such as job satisfaction. As mentioned above, the single role that an entrepreneur plays is higher and more meaningful than a respective manager within a larger organization. Therefore, Study 2 evaluated the previous cross-culture career experience of entrepreneurs and measure their Career Success. Moreover, it came to my attention while critically reviewing the literature, that some studies mention entrepreneurship in conjunction with international experience as a success indicator. For example, entrepreneurship was one of the measurements for innovation in a study of Tadmor and colleagues (2012), where the authors asked MBA students about their own original ideas in regards to their inceptions and what impact their cross-border experience had on those ideas. Entrepreneurship was also used as measurement for J1 Visa holders in the US (Luet al., 2016). Also, it was found that an individual leader plays a very important role in the success of a company as he can impact the behavior of the whole firm (Staw, 1991) and a young company often does not have much organizational experience which means that the founders' experience can make a huge impact on the companies' success (Shrader, Oviatt, & McDougall, 2000).

Methodology

Secondary data was collected within a dataset about startup companies and entrepreneurs from *Crunchbase*³, which includes a list of over 100.000 startup companies as well as over 450.000 entrepreneurs from around the world. The reason why I chose this list of entrepreneurs is because as described in the literature review, most research about this topic relies on surveys, which limits the data on one or two countries and often only one particular firm. The Crunchbase dataset however contains global information, which can bring a unique value for this study.

Since Crunchbase is the largest database of its kind, it ensures that the randomly chosen individuals come from different countries, organizations and different universities. This is an advantage over previous studies that were only relying on data from one organization, which can bias the results (Kraimer, Shaffer, & Bolino, 2009). To compose the sample, I randomly selected the names of entrepreneurs as well as the name of the company which they founded. The dataset also contains information about the status of the startup (Exit, IPO, funding rounds, funding size, etc.). The given dataset sample however does not contain information about the previous international experiences of founders. Therefore, the link to the founders' profiles on LinkedIn and similar public sources such as the startups website were be used to measure the variables.

Originally, it was planned to compare successful entrepreneurs with not successful entrepreneurs in regards to their pre-career international experience. Unfortunately, many founders that fail are reluctant to share information about the failure and are more likely to not have a public LinkedIn profile, which is the main source to gather information about the educational details of the founders.

Hence, I decided to take a sample with only successful entrepreneurs and then to compare those among each other. A successful company was defined as a firm that was at least three years old and still operating or acquired, because most startups fail in the first years after inception. Also, the companies had to raise some external funding of at least \$100,000. This led to approximately 23k datapoints. Among those, a random sample of 259 founders were selected and checked for several variables such as the number of months spent abroad during university, if one had expatriate assignments or the degree of internationalization. This degree was

³ Dataset source: <https://data.crunchbase.com/>

created by me and weights the internationality of founders in order to make them more comparable to each other. The score goes from 0 to 1 and includes the variables *int_exp* (dummy; whether or not one has obvious international experience), *int_exp_months* (the length of study abroad in months) and *expat* (dummy; whether or not one has conducted an expat assignment). It calculates according to the following formula:

$$\text{int_score} = \text{int_exp} \times 0.2 + \frac{\text{int_exp_months}}{144 \text{ months}} \times 0.6 + \text{expat} \times 0.2$$

Also, as described in Chapter 2.1, demographics can also influence the career advancement of an individual. Therefore, I controlled for gender and immigration. Other factors such as race or if the founder is married are neglected, because of a lack of available data⁴. The following list describes all variables in detail:

Variable	Description
<i>int_exp</i>	Dummy variable: Whether the entrepreneur had obvious pre-career international experience of any kind (including exchange semesters, internships abroad and even extensive travel), or not.
<i>int_exp_months</i>	The length of international experience collected during university in months.
<i>expat</i>	Dummy variable: in case of any expatriate assignments (even after graduation).
<i>int_exp_or_expats</i>	Dummy variable: Whether the entrepreneur had obvious pre-career international experience AND expatriate assignments or not.
<i>int_score</i>	Weighted score to assess the internationality of the individual ⁵
<i>male</i>	Dummy variable for the gender.
<i>usa</i>	Dummy variable for founders from the US.
<i>immigrant</i>	Dummy variable for immigrating to the country where the startup is located.
<i>grad_year</i>	Year of the university graduation of the founder.

Table 1: Description of variables

⁵ Calculates: $\text{int_exp} \times 20\% + (\text{int_exp_months} / \text{maximum months in sample}) \times 60\% + \text{expat} \times 20\%$

Results and discussion

The following table provides an overview over the sample and its variables. Among the 259 founders, 137 work for companies from the US, 63 from Europe, 36 from Asia (without India), 9 from Brazil, 7 from Canada and 7 from India⁶.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
funding_rounds	259	1	7	2,53	1,536
funding_total_usd	259	106625	119707000	10454134,52	23062453,357
FoundationYear	259	2011	2013	2012,21	,781
int_score	259	,00	,80	,1679	,20845
int_exp_or_expatriat	259	0	1	,47	,500
int_exp	259	0	1	,34	,476
int_exp_months	259	0	144	14,14	27,036
expatriat	259	0	1	,20	,401
male	259	0	1	,89	,316
usa	259	0	1	,52	,501
immigrant	259	0	1	,17	,380
grad_year	259	1977	2017	2002,18	8,361
Valid N (listwise)	259				

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of dataset

⁶ A complete list of country frequency can be find in Appendix B.

The impact of pre-career international experience on graduates' Career Success

		Funding Rounds	Funding Total USD	Found. Year	Int. Score	Int. Exp. Int. Exp.	Int. Exp. In months	Expat	Male	USA	Immi- grant	Grad. Year
Funding Rounds	Pearson Cor- relation (PC)	1	,576**	,266**	,003	,029	,063	,048	,076	,147*	,047	,162**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,964	,645	,310	,437	,221	,018	,454	,009
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259
Funding Total USD	PC	,576**	1	-,289**	-,041	-,037	-,037	-,013	,016	,122	-,055	-,033
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,510	,552	,558	,834	,799	,051	,380	,598
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259
Foundation Year	PC	-,266**	-,289**	1	,155*	,116	,049	,197**	-,092	-,076	,019	,205**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,013	,063	,435	,001	,141	,223	,762	,001
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259
Int. Score	PC	,003	-,041	,155*	1	,849**	,864**	,377**	,024	-,160**	,708**	,086
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,964	,510	,013		,000	,000	,000	,700	,010	,000	,166
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259
Int. Experience	PC	-,029	-,037	,116	,849**	1	,724**	,003	-,027	-,153*	,569**	,133*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,645	,552	,063	,000		,000	,966	,669	,014	,000	,033
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259
Int. exp. In months	PC	,063	-,037	,049	,864**	,724**	1	-,018	,029	-,083	,775**	,080
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,310	,558	,435	,000	,000		,775	,647	,182	,000	,198
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259
Expat	PC	-,048	-,013	,197**	,377**	,003	-,018	1	,056	-,118	,075	-,046
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,437	,834	,001	,000	,966	,775		,372	,058	,226	,456
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259
Male	PC	-,076	,016	-,092	,024	-,027	,029	,056	1	-,095	,001	-,026
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,221	,799	,141	,700	,669	,647	,372		,126	,984	,675
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259
USA	PC	,147*	,122	-,076	-,160**	-,153*	-,083	-,118	-,095	1	,032	-,158*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,018	,051	,223	,010	,014	,182	,058	,126		,614	,011
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259
Immigrant	PC	,047	-,055	,019	,708**	,569**	,775**	,075	,001	,032	1	,076
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,454	,380	,762	,000	,000	,000	,226	,984	,614		,225
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259
Grad. year	PC	,162**	-,033	,205**	,086	,133*	,080	-,046	-,026	-,158*	,076	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,009	,598	,001	,166	,033	,198	,456	,675	,011	,225	
	N	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	259

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3: Correlation table of entire dataset

As can be seen in table 3 above, the **international score** was not correlated with the dependent variables total **funding in USD** and **funding rounds**. Therefore, my analysis approach was changed and only founders that had spent at least 1 month abroad were considered.

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		Funding Rounds	Funding Total USD	Found. Year	Int. Score	Int. Exp.	Int. Exp. In months	Expat	Male	USA	Immi- grant	Grad. Year
Funding Rounds	PC	1	,560**	-,219*	,312**	. ^a	,244*	,182	,005	,062	,227*	,241*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,040	,003	.	,021	,088	,963	,566	,033	,023
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
Funding Total USD	PC	,560**	1	-,451**	,059	. ^a	-,029	,153	,121	,102	-,053	-,013
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,581	.	,788	,152	,259	,344	,620	,907
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
FoundationYear	PC	-,219*	-,451**	1	-,041	. ^a	-,085	,068	-,056	,015	-,090	,230*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,040	,000		,705	.	,427	,525	,604	,888	,403	,030
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
Int. Score	PC	,312**	,059	-,041	1	. ^a	,847**	,489**	,197	,077	,669**	-,065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	,581	,705		.	,000	,000	,064	,473	,000	,545
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
Int. Experience	PC	. ^a	. ^a	. ^a	. ^a	. ^a	. ^a	. ^a	. ^a	. ^a	. ^a	. ^a
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
Int. exp. In months	PC	,244*	-,029	-,085	,847**	. ^a	1	-,049	,113	,069	,681**	-,041
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,021	,788	,427	,000	.		,650	,290	,521	,000	,701
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
Expat	PC	,182	,153	,068	,489**	. ^a	-,049	1	,189	,029	,140	-,056
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,088	,152	,525	,000	.	,650		,076	,785	,189	,605
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
Male	PC	,005	,121	-,056	,197	. ^a	,113	,189	1	-,168	,013	-,001
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,963	,259	,604	,064	.	,290	,076		,115	,903	,993
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
USA	PC	,062	,102	,015	,077	. ^a	,069	,029	-,168	1	,344**	,014
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,566	,344	,888	,473	.	,521	,785	,115		,001	,898
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
Immigrant	PC	,227*	-,053	-,090	,669**	. ^a	,681**	,140	,013	,344**	1	,023
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,033	,620	,403	,000	.	,000	,189	,903	,001		,827
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89
Grad. year	PC	,241*	-,013	,230*	-,065	. ^a	-,041	-,056	-,001	,014	,023	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,023	,907	,030	,545	.	,701	,605	,993	,898	,827	
	N	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Correlation Table of international founders (months > 0)

Table 4 above shows that the international score has a strong significant correlation ($p < 0.01$ level) with funding rounds. This is similar to the international experience spent in months, which shows that a larger number of months spent abroad ($p < 0.05$ level) led to more funding rounds. However, this increase in funding rounds evidently did not translate to an overall increase in the funding received.

A simple linear regression was calculated in order to predict funding amount and funding rounds based on the experience spent abroad in months and the internationalization score. Table 5 shows the results of the regression analysis with the entire dataset below. The regression analysis was not able to show a statistically significant relationship between these independent and dependent variables. *Objective* success factors were chosen for the dependent variables. As can be seen, variables *international experience in months* and *the international score* do not explain the funding rounds or total funding in USD. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable (s)	R ²	F	Sig.	Beta
H2 (International founders are more successful)	International exp. In months	Total funding in USD	,001	,344	,558	-,037
	International Score		,002	,435	,510	-,041
	International exp. In months	Funding Rounds	,004	1,035	,310	,063
	International Score		,000	,002	,964	,003

Table 5: Simple linear regression with entire dataset

Therefore, I decided to take a closer look into the data of founders that spent time abroad. A first impression was already given from the correlation tables above. The following table shows the linear regression with the founders that spend at least one month abroad or more:

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable (s)	R ²	F	Sig	Beta
H3 (longer stay has higher effect)	International exp. In months	Total funding in USD	,001	,073	,788	-,029
	International Score		,004	,306	,581	,059
	International exp. In months	Funding Rounds	,059	5,503	,021	,244*
	International Score		,097	9,393	,003	,312**
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Table 6: Simple linear regression among founders that studied abroad

Interestingly, a higher internationality among founders that spent time abroad, did not lead to more success in terms of raised funding, but did in terms of funding rounds. The length in months spent abroad explains 5,9% of the variance in the amount of funding rounds ($R^2=0.059$, $F=5.503$, $p<0.05$). This effect is even stronger with the internationalization score, which also takes into consideration other obvious international experiences and expatriate assignments ($R^2=0.097$, $F=9,393$, $p<0.01$). Hence, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

5. Overall Conclusion

I predicted that students with international experience are more successful in their career than students without. The conducted mixed-method approach fulfilled its purpose to deliver results that considered the perspective of companies as well as the Career Success of individuals.

Study 1 found that, although international companies look for international experience when they consider hiring candidates, the opinions among the interview partners were not aligned. The profile of candidates therefore had to fulfill other requirements such as previous practical experiences, education and other skills. Also, candidates have to show the ability to work in international teams and match to the company culture.

Study 2 looked deeper into entrepreneurs in regards to their pre-career international experience and Career Success by measuring collected funding and the number of funding rounds. Results did not show a statistically significant relationship between international experience and Career Success in general. Interestingly, among the international founders, the ones with a higher degree of internationality and a longer experience abroad were more successful in terms of founding rounds, but not necessarily in terms of funding amount. This effect was stronger with a longer stay abroad.

6. Limitations and Future Research

This thesis has some limitations. First of all, although the dataset of Crunchbase included data about startup companies from all over the world, it was sometimes hard to obtain detailed data from founders that lived in countries where LinkedIn is not common and where the English language is not spoken. Most of the time, it was not possible to obtain data from founders that came outside of North America, South America, Europe or Australia. In particular, entrepreneurs from Russia and China were harder to investigate. Secondly, the study neglected some factors that might contribute to the success of a startup as well. For instance, many founders showed certain industry-specific technical skills that might foster their Career Success. In addition, the fact that the database was from an American website and that most founders in the US are very active on LinkedIn, led to the fact that half of the samples were from American founders. This has to be taken into consideration when elaborating the sample results. As only less than 10 percent of the other authors collected global data, makes this thesis actually very valuable for future research (Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012). The third point is that in order to avoid a too complex data gathering, several additional attributes that might lead to Career Success were neglected as well. For example, ethnic background, amount of friends with different backgrounds or the personality play were not considered, although it can play a role in regards to the cultural adaption of the individual expatriate (Takeuchi, Tesluk, Yun, & Lepak, 2005). Also, for simplicity reasons, I assumed that all international experiences have the same effect on an individual. This also means that all types of experiences were measured in the same way. However, some authors in literature state that not every kind of experience will promote Career Success in the same way (Tadmor, Galinsky, & Maddux, 2012). Lastly, it has to be said that it was not possible to compare successful founders with non-successful founders, as there is a lack of reliable data about failing companies. The reason therefore is that founders do not like to share too much information about their failures. Also, it was much more likely that the founder of a failing startup was not present on sources such as LinkedIn. Therefore, only successful founders have been considered and then compared amongst each other.

Already two decades ago, management research found out about the paucity of global leaders in companies. It was said that also in the future it would be even more important to invest in the development of those leaders, but it would require training, understanding of employees' needs and most importantly attempting to retain them after their return (Gregersen, Morrison, & Black, 1998). Indeed, this topic gained in importance over the last couple of years as could be proven with Hypothesis 4. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to further investigate into that topic. Also, many studies are focused on the expatriation of employees and how this affects the Career Success of individuals or the firm's performance. However, most authors only consider the intra-organizational Career Success and perceive that repatriates, who leave the company, do not achieve this Career Success. This raises the question if those repatriates really are worse off than their counterparts who stay with their organization. Perhaps, the international assignment experience helped them to advance their career in another firm. This would be definitely a topic for future research.

7. References

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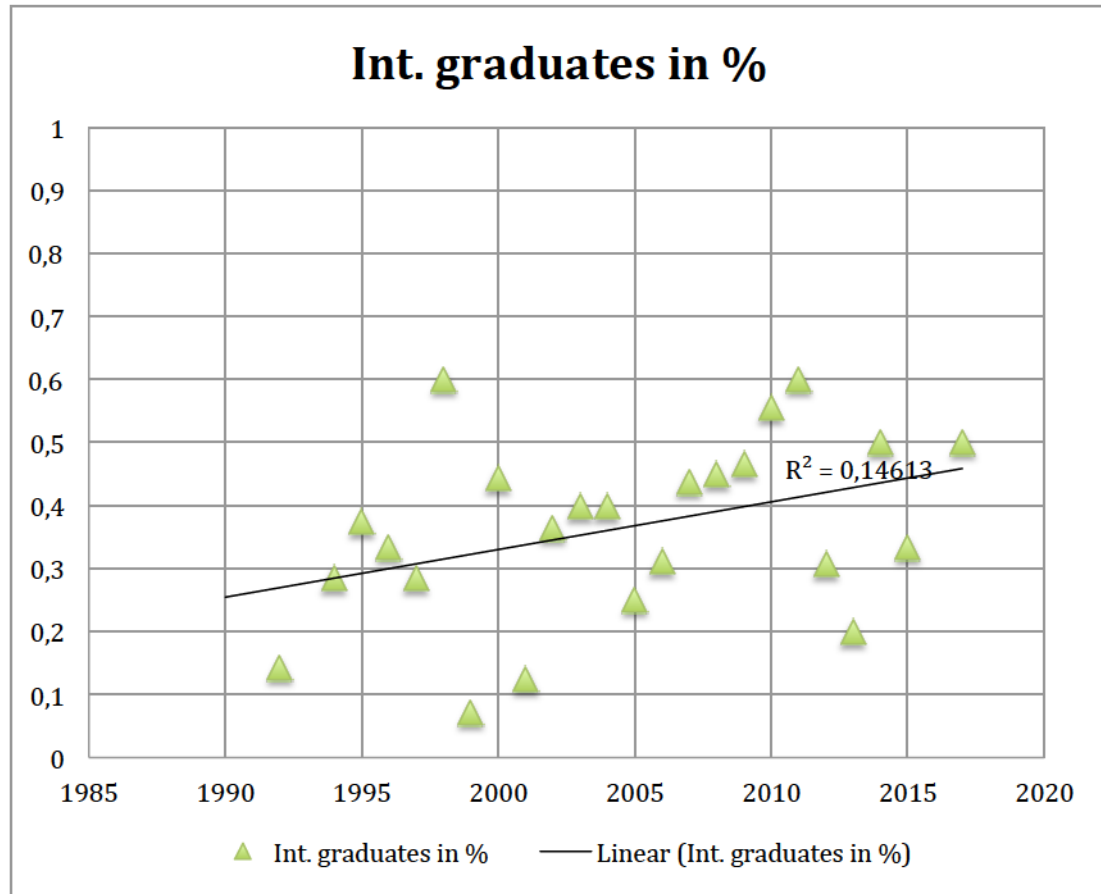
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8. Appendices

Appendix A: Frequency of countries in data sample

Country	Count
USA	136
GBR	15
BRA	9
DEU	9
CAN	7
FRA	7
IND	7
N/A	6
IRL	5
NLD	5
BEL	4
GRC	4
LVA	4
MYS	4
SGP	4
AUT	3
ITA	3
MEX	3
ARM	2
AUS	2
CHN	2
DNK	2
FIN	2
ISR	2
JPN	2
SVN	2
THA	2
CZE	1
NIC	1
NZL	1
RUS	1
SWE	1
TUR	1

Appendix B: Percentage of international graduates in Dataset



Appendix C: Graduation Year and international experience in months

